



Beartooth Highway - Snow Depth  
Photo Courtesy of Maintenance Division

# NEWSLINE

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## Performance Programming Process - What Is It?

**"A method to develop an optimal investment plan and measure progress in moving toward strategic transportation system goals."**

Montana's Transportation Commission makes investment decisions annually on over \$300 million in state and Federal funds. Even with the dramatic increase in Federal Transportation funding that Montana received in 1998 with enactment of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21), the state's transportation needs continue to exceed available resources. It's not a surprise that in a state like Montana, with a lot of road miles and very few people, resources remain scarce and tough highway investment decisions have to be made.

The Montana Department of Transportation's (MDT) Performance Programming Process (P<sup>3</sup>) ensures the

the best systems-wide investment decisions are made given:

- overall direction from our customers.
- available resources.
- as tracked over time by monitoring system performance.

### How Does P<sup>3</sup> Work? (a thumbnail sketch)

Several different annual and multiple year cycles interact to plan, program and deliver Montana's highway improvements. In general, these processes get increasingly specific. P<sup>3</sup> ensures they are all moving in the same direction.

**Vision** – Montana has a statewide transportation plan which establishes a direction and a vision for management and development of its transportation system into the long-range future. This planning document, known as "TranPlan 21", was based on extensive public comment and technical analysis. It gives broad direction, such as "improve pavement conditions on the Interstate and National Highway Systems." But, it does not specify which projects should be built or the timing of individual improvements.

**Performance Goals** – Given the direction set in the long-range plan, the next question is what can be achieved in highway system performance given currently available and anticipated revenues? This question is answered by performing a series of trade-off analyses, and developing a performance based funding distribution plan for system, district and project mix. Overall, the aim of this plan is to get the best statewide highway system performance for the available funding – and commitment to moving the overall program toward specific performance goals. This analysis uses the technical power of MDT's management systems described in the next column.

**Investment Decisions** – the funding distribution plan described above suggests funding levels by district, system and type of work. This funding plan is based on predicted system performance given anticipated funding and a specific program mix being delivered. Clearly these predictions will only come about if projects are developed and delivered consistent with the plan. While P<sup>3</sup> does not "pick" projects, it does guide the project nomination process. The tentative list of proposed projects presented to the public during development of the annual "Statewide Transportation Improvement Program" is consistent with this plan. Based on public comments a specific project could either enter or be dropped from the new program – but overall the mix should support the performance goals developed above.

**Implement and Monitor** – MDT uses computer-based management systems that assist in summarizing the condition of the transportation system and evaluating the impacts of various investment options. These systems are used in managing highway pavements, roadway congestion, bridge conditions and safety. For example – ride quality, rutting, delay time, traffic volume, pavement cracking, bridge deck condition, and crashes – are just a few of the many technical and operational characteristics tracked annually by these systems. With P<sup>3</sup>, the management systems are used to analyze various funding alternatives. Just as importantly, the management systems are also used to track the actual performance of the highway system after the investments are made. Over time, this feedback loop will increase the predictive capacity of the management systems and MDT's overall accountability.

For a free Performance Programming Process brochure call (406) 444-6331 or 800-335-7592 (TTY). For more information contact Sandra Straehl at (406) 444-7692 or [ssstraehl@state.mt.us](mailto:ssstraehl@state.mt.us).

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# Water Discharge Permits Halted

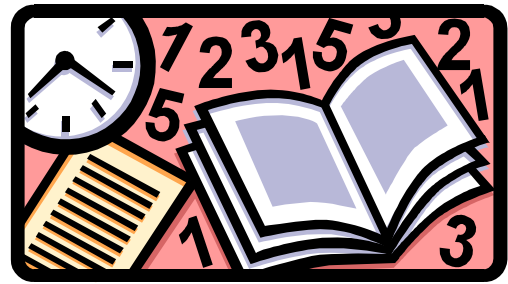
At the end of September, MDT became aware of a Federal District Court order which prohibited both the EPA and the Montana Department of Environmental Quality from issuing stream discharge permits. Historically, 85% - 90% of all highway construction projects have obtained these permits. Consequently, MDT rescinded contract awards on over \$38 million worth of projects and expected to delay awards on another \$100 million worth of projects through December. This Court order also prohibited construction projects from moving forward on improvements to municipal water supplies and wastewater treatment facilities.

On November 3, 2000, the Federal District Court judge presiding over this case ruled that the general permit used by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality as a template, from which site-specific permits were issued, was itself a permit that preceded the September 21, 2000, Court Order. Consequently, all site-specific permits, which flow from this general permit, were clear of the court's prohibition on issuing permits.

This interpretation immediately cleared the way for the MDT highway construction projects to proceed.

However, since the general permit will expire in August of 2002, MDT may be faced with this issue in the future. MDT staff will advocate for a concerted strategic effort to address this permit issue under the governor-elect Judy Martz.

**Transportation  
Commission Meeting  
December 7th,  
Sheraton Inn  
Billings, MT.**



## *2001 Final STIP Available*

The **final** version of the 2001-2003 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is available. The STIP is a list of most major transportation projects planned for the next three Federal fiscal years, including Aeronautics, Rail, Highway, Public Transportation, and Federal Lands Highway projects.

The STIP lists proposed new projects for Montana's transportation network, as well as the Department's best estimate of when transportation projects will begin in the coming years. The information in the STIP is based on assumptions about the amount of funding available and projections on when design work, environmental documentation, right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation, permitting, and all other aspects of project development can be completed. In addition, public comments made in response to the 2001 Draft STIP were considered during the preparation of the Final STIP.

### ***To request a copy of the 2001 Final STIP:***

- ✓ Check with your local library
- ✓ Visit our Internet site:  
<http://www.mdt.state.mt.us/planning/stip.html>
- ✓ Call the Montana Department of Transportation at 1-800-714-7296 or Jeff Ebert at 406-444-7639, [jebert@state.mt.us](mailto:jebert@state.mt.us), or Deidra Kloberdanz at 406-444-9193, [dkloberdanz@state.mt.us](mailto:dkloberdanz@state.mt.us)
- ✓ Write the Montana Department of Transportation, Transportation Improvement Program, PO Box 201001, Helena, MT 59620-1001.

The TTY number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-335-7592. Alternative accessible formats of the information will be made available upon request.



## ***“Connecting Communities with Trails”***

**Montana State Trails Symposium**

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks is planning a State Trails Symposium in Billings next spring. The symposium will be held at the Billings Sheraton Hotel on April 5-7, 2001. There are numerous local and state groups involved with this effort including the Mon-



tana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Department, Montana Department of Transportation, Bu-

reau of Land Management, US Forest Service, National Park Service, Montana Community Foundation, Montana Parks Association, Western Heritage Center, Yellowstone River Parks Association and BikeNet. The theme of the symposium is “Connecting Communities with Trails.”

This is a tremendous opportunity to bring people together from across the state who are interested in developing trails and greenways, and promoting bike/pedestrian opportunities in their communities. The State Trails Plan has identified that even though there are numerous trails in the state, more trails are needed. The State Trails Symposium will touch on all aspects of trails, but the greatest emphasis will be in the urban or near urban setting.

This conference is a must for trail advocates, planners, engineers, landscape architects, consultants, historians, park and recreation folks and elected officials. There will be a nominal charge of \$35.00 for registration for full participation which includes meals. More information will be forthcoming as details are finalized.

## **Transit Needs Study Nears Completion**

After nearly a year of data collection and hard work Montana’s first Rural Public Transportation Needs Study is nearing completion with publication scheduled for January of 2001.

Leigh, Scott and Cleary (LSC), a consulting firm with national experience in transit planning issues, is developing the study to provide MDT with updated information on transit service levels in all 56 Montana counties as well as an assessment of unmet county-level and statewide needs. MDT’s transit program managers will use the study results to ensure the most cost-effective distribution of transit funds.

The study effort is being assisted by a 9-member advisory committee of representatives of local transit agencies and State funding and social service agencies.

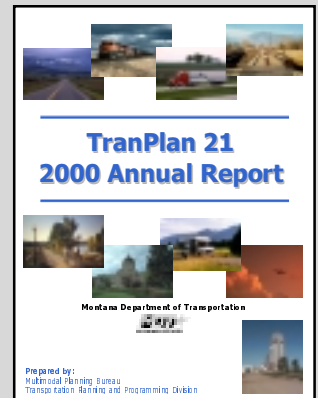
For more information about the study contact Tom Stuber at 444-9216 or [tstuber@state.mt.us](mailto:tstuber@state.mt.us).

## ***TranPlan 21 2000 Annual Report***

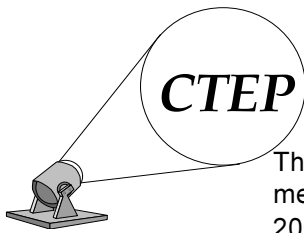
The *TranPlan 21 2000 Annual Report* is now available from the Multimodal Planning Bureau. This is the fifth report published since the adoption of TranPlan 21, Montana’s first statewide transportation plan, in 1995.

The report follows the same format as in previous years with a few minor revisions. It consists of an overview of transportation system characteristics including economic indicators, freight mobility, roadway system performance, passenger transportation, and funding. In addition, the report contains an update on the status of the policy goals and actions established by TranPlan 21.

For additional copies or more information on the report, please contact Dick Turner at 444-7289 or Kris Christensen at 444-9240. The report is also available via the Montana Department of Transportation Internet Homepage ([www.mdt.state.mt.us](http://www.mdt.state.mt.us)).







## CTEP Project Spotlight

The CTEP (Community Transportation Enhancement Program) has reimbursed local and tribal governments (LTG's) with a total of \$ 3,074,910.73 in Federal funds from January 1 to October 31, 2000. The 2000 construction season was very productive, below are some of the completed projects:

### Fort Peck Theatre, Valley County

The historic Fort Peck Theatre, listed in the National Register of



Historic Places in 1983, qualified for CTEP funds under the Historic Preservation category. The historic nature of the building required design and materials specifications be approved by the State

Historic Preservation Office. These improvements assure the preservation of the building's integrity, reduction of operating costs and allow year-round operation as a performing arts center. Work was completed in late summer of 2000 and consisted of removing the existing roofing, installing insulation, adding plywood sheathing, new roofing, and refurbishing various hatches and vents on the roof. Valley County committed a portion of their CTEP funds for the project and the Fort Peck Theatre Restoration Committee supplied the required local match. We compliment both organizations for their willingness to work together and overcome hurdles encountered. This cooperative effort resulted in completion of a project that otherwise may not have occurred.

### Landscaping Entryways-Bozeman, Gallatin County



This summer's construction season saw the City of Bozeman completing landscaping using CTEP funding. The Welcome to Bozeman entryway signs, North Seventh median landscaping, East Main Street tree plantings, and the North Seventh Sculpture Park improvements have enhanced the esthetic, cultural and environmental character of the transportation corridor in the Bozeman area. This project has been well received by local citizens and visitors to the area. The majority of the work is complete and the City has indicated this project's cost is anticipated to come very close to the estimated budget for construction. Thanks to the City of Bozeman and J & J Construction of Helena for a job well done.

### Sidewalks/Landscaping - Belt, Cascade County

The project is located on Castner Street in Belt. The work consisted of replacing existing sidewalk, curb and gutter, installing period style

lighting, new storm drain catch basins, trees and tree grates. In order to replace parts of the existing sidewalk, vaults had to be filled, which meant building retaining walls and then filling the affected parts of the vaults. This project was built under the Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities/Landscaping categories of CTEP. This type of project is popular because not only are parts of the infrastructure repaired, but a sense of ambiance is added to commercial areas.



### Edgerton Path, Flathead County

The Edgerton Path consists of a bicycle/pedestrian path along Whitefish Stage Road, one mile north of Kalispell. This path will provide a safe alternative for bicycle and pedestrian traffic to Edgerton Elementary School. The eight-foot wide asphalt path is a little over one and one half miles long with the south end ultimately connecting into Lawrence Park through future CTEP projects. The north end of the Edgerton Path terminates at Reserve Drive. The approximate construction cost was \$178,000. Thanks to Flathead County and Thomas, Dean and Hoskins for a job well done.

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The purpose of CTEP is to creatively facilitate and streamline the funding, design, bid letting and construction of your projects. Our focus is to improve the transportation experience in and through local communities. Please remember the project application submittal schedule:

Financial District #1= March

Financial District #2 = May

Financial District #3 = July

Financial District #4 = September

Financial District #5 = November

If you have any questions, concerns or ideas about CTEP call Thomas Martin at 444-0809 or e-mail [tmartin@state.mt.us](mailto:tmartin@state.mt.us).

# Safety Seat Safety

Did you know that motor vehicle crashes continue to be the leading cause of death for children nationwide and specifically in Montana? If safety seats had protected all children under 5 years of age, an estimated 495 lives nationally could have been saved in 1997. In fact, child safety seats reduce the risk of fatal injury by 69% for infants and 47% for toddlers. Also, the behavior of unbuckled adults directly affects Montana children. When a driver is unbuckled, 70% of the time, children riding in that car are also unbuckled.

MDT's Traffic Safety Bureau has developed a national certification training program in child passenger safety. The program is presented to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to child safety advocates (law enforcement, firemen, Native Americans, medical personnel including nurses, child care providers, traffic safety coordinators, health departments). Several Montana cities currently have certified people, including; Helena, Billings, Missoula, Great Falls, Kalispell, Bozeman, Butte, Dillon, Drummond, Hamilton, Polson, Poplar, Malta, Seeley Lake, Stevensville, Thompson Falls, Lewistown, Sidney, Glendive, Scobey, Havre, Dillon, Miles City, Browning, Box Elder, Chinook, and Red Lodge.

Though not all-inclusive, the training includes the following topics of interest:

- ♦ Importance of correct harness threading and adjustment.
- ♦ Teaching parents about the proper seating positions for children in air bag equipped motor vehicles.
- ♦ Knowing the purpose and differences between belt shortening and regular locking clips and how detrimental it could be using them incorrectly.
- ♦ What safety seat to use based upon the child's weight, age, and height.
- ♦ Current information about new federally regulated tethers and anchorage systems within vehicles that hold child safety seats.
- ♦ The various seat belt systems found in vehicles that impact the fit of child safety seats.
- ♦ The different air bag systems and basic information on how to disconnect air bags. This is mainly for firemen and medical personnel who often arrive at crash scenes where the airbag has not deployed and the driver and/or passenger may still

be in the vehicle.

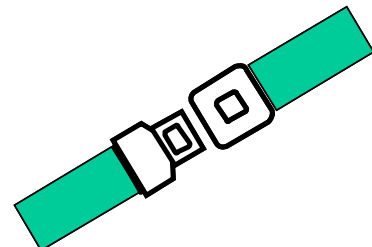
Most trained personnel are actively involved in educating the public in their area on the importance of proper safety seat usage and installation. Safety seat clinics are periodically held at major shopping areas to show parents how to install a child safety seat. Other technicians have set up permanent fitting stations for parents so they have a place to go and have their child's safety seat checked. Most fitting stations are at fire stations located in Bozeman, Kalispell, and Missoula. Other communities, like Helena, have a fitting station at a child care center. In Butte, Kalispell, Billings, and Dillon

hospital nurses and staff show new parents how to install safety seats for infants. In Blaine County, parents can have their child's safety seat checked at the Sheriff's office. In other places throughout the state, parents receive help from local law enforcement and the Highway Patrol in checking their child's seat. In Havre, a technician at a Head Start organization shows parents

the appropriate way to install and use child safety seats for different ages.

Testimony from certified technicians has verified that checking child safety seats and teaching parents about their proper use saves lives. For example, a parent in Bozeman involved in a severe vehicle crash in 1999 said her child's life was saved because she learned to properly install a child safety seat at a clinic she attended in Bozeman. A similar story was told in Cascade County by a parent who attended a clinic in Great Falls and was later involved in a crash. Her child's life was saved because she had the knowledge to install her child's seat correctly. Child safety seat training helps technicians teach parents to do the right thing when it comes to the safety of their children when riding in vehicles in Montana.

For more information call Priscilla Sinclair at 406-444-7417 or e-mail [psinclair@state.mt.us](mailto:psinclair@state.mt.us).



# Federal Trade Corridors and Montana

Congress has identified 43 High Priority Trade Corridors throughout the US since 1991. Two of these corridors, CANAMEX and Camino Real, include segments in Montana. Although this Federal identification raises awareness about trade issues along these routes, and creates eligibility for two Federal discretionary funding programs, the identification does not impose any additional Federal design standards or other requirements for these routes.

MDT has worked on several efforts over the last nine years associated with these corridors, and will continue to participate in studies and initiatives that promise a net benefit for Montana's transportation system and economy.

## **Camino Real**

In Montana, the Camino Real Corridor follows Interstate 90 from the Wyoming state line to Billings, Montana Highway 3 from Billings to Great Falls, and Interstate 15 from Great Falls to Sweet Grass on the Canadian line. South of Montana, the corridor passes through Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, and terminates in El Paso, Texas.

Beginning in 1992, MDT participated in a multi-state initiative led by Colorado to coordinate activities and analyze improvement needs on this corridor. More recently, MDT has worked with the Wyoming DOT since 1998 to develop a joint port-of-entry between Sheridan, Wyoming and Billings to replace two aging and unsafe facilities. The new state-of-the-art facility will reduce delays for motor carriers and improve law enforcement coverage along the corridor. MDT is also working with Billings and Yellowstone County on a Bypass Feasibility Study for a proposed Montana Highway 3 bypass of Billings.

## **CANAMEX**

The CANAMEX Corridor follows the entire length of Interstate 15 in Montana before passing through Idaho, Utah, and Nevada and terminating in Nogales, Arizona.

Montana is a member of a 5-state CANAMEX Corridor Coalition led by Arizona. Unlike Utah, Arizona, and Nevada, Montana has few highway infra-

structure needs on the CANAMEX Corridor. Montana's interest in the Coalition is therefore focused on economic development initiatives currently being developed through a CANAMEX Corridor Plan. Although the final plan won't be completed until April, preliminary economic forecasts indicate the initiatives, if implemented, could bring over 70,000 new jobs to Montana over the next 30 years. A public meeting on the draft plan is scheduled in February in Great Falls. More information about the CANAMEX Corridor and study is available at [www.canamex.org](http://www.canamex.org).



## 2000-2001 Winter Weather Information

Regularly scheduled reports are available seven days a week with a brief regional summary report at 6:30 a.m., and a more detailed report statewide of interstates and major highways at approximately 7:30 a.m. An afternoon detailed statewide report is provided Monday through Friday at approximately 3:30 p.m. Updates will be provided as major changes occur throughout each day.

This report may be accessed by phoning 1-800-226-7623 or \*ROAD (7623) if you are a CellularOne, Verizon Wireless or Sagebrush cell phone user. You may also view a color map and other winter road condition reports on the Traveler Information Page at [state.mt.us/roads](http://state.mt.us/roads) and **weather reports**.

For local road information you can dial:

Billings - (406)652-1916  
Glasgow - (406)228-9625  
Great Falls - (406)453-5469  
Helena - (406)449-5204  
Kalispell - (406)755-4829  
Missoula - (406)721-3939



## Bozeman Rest Area Draws Winning Comments



“This is the nicest rest area we have ever seen!”

“Very, very nice. Traveled from Indiana to Washington State. Best rest stop yet!”

“Wish State of Texas rest areas were this nice!”

These comments are a sample of the flood of superlatives bestowed upon the recently completed Bozeman rest area during a survey conducted October 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>. Several rest area users appreciated the facility’s modern design and spaciousness. Although most of the respondents came from out-of-state, the survey included valuable input from Montanans.

“I’m glad it is near Bozeman – a nice plus for our city!” noted a local resident who dropped by to investigate the newly opened facility.

The Bozeman rest area represents the new direction MDT is taking in rest area design as a result of recommendations in the 1999 Montana Rest Area Plan. The building design is one of two new designs recently developed for Montana’s rest area program. The other design is the basis for a new rest area planned at Sweet Grass.

This new philosophy in rest area design puts Montana on the cutting edge of traveler comfort and safety, and should serve interstate commerce and Montana travelers well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

MDT will use the survey results to improve the design of future rest areas. For more information about the survey, call Jeff Laub at (406) 444-9192 or [jlaub@state.mt.us](mailto:jlaub@state.mt.us).

## Fire Consumes Resources

The fire season of 2000, which officially ended on September 11, continues to burn in our memories. The sight of charred hills as we travel throughout the state remind us of the high price paid in firefighting efforts.

The 2000 fire season was costly to Montana in many ways. Aside from the active firefighting efforts and loss of millions of timbered acres, several departments contributed resources throughout the season. MDT contributed approximately \$300,000 in labor hours, equipment and materials to the firefighting effort for traffic control during July – September 2000.

The Missoula District provided extraordinary traffic control at Lolo Pass and Lost Trail Pass with the joint effort of Maintenance, Equipment, Construction and Motor Carriers employees. These employees racked up 5,267 labor hours working long, hard, and HOT shifts throughout the fire season. The labor hours added to equipment, materials and construction costs brings the total close to \$170,000. The other fire stricken districts were also provided equipment and resources by MDT.

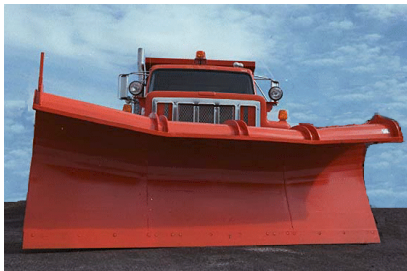
For more information contact Mike Bousliman (406) 444-6159 or [mbousliman@state.mt.us](mailto:mbousliman@state.mt.us).

## Safety Internet Site

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (MCSA) is developing a long-term strategy to reduce truck and bus-related fatalities on U.S. highways. 5,203 Americans died and 127,000 were injured in traffic crashes involving large trucks in 1999. To address this national problem, Secretary of Transportation Rodney Slater established a Departmental goal last year to reduce commercial vehicle-related fatalities 50 percent by 2010. A report has been made to the U.S. Congress with a 10-year strategy to improve vehicle, driver, and carrier safety.

MCSA is interested in your ideas and suggestions on how to accomplish this goal. To facilitate involvement in discussions and planning, MCSA has created an Internet Web site at <http://spp.fmcsa.dot.gov>. Here, you and your colleagues will find statements, papers, and plans for review and comment.

If you are interested you can visit the site, respond to questions, offer statements for discussion or submit suggestions for consideration.



## Winter Driving Tips - Don't Crowd the Plow!

- An average snowplow weighs 50,000 pounds compared to your car at 3,000 pounds. *Don't take chances!*
- You should assume the snowplow drivers do **NOT** see you.
- Snowplows travel 30 to 50 mph slower than other vehicles. Reduce your speed!
- Be patient. Never try passing through or into a snow cloud caused by plowing light snow from crosswinds.

## Transportation Planning Division Telephone Numbers

Only the most frequently requested numbers are listed here. For an area or person not listed, call **1-800-714-7296** (in Montana only), or **(406) 444-3423**. TTY (406) 444-7696 or 1-800-335-7592.

Administrator (Patricia Saindon) .....	444-3143
Bike/Pedestrian (Carol Strizich) .....	444-9273
CTEP (Mike Davis) .....	444-4383
Mapping (Jim Erickson) .....	444-6119
Multimodal Planning (Dick Turner) .....	444-7289
Projects (Jeff Ebert) .....	444-7639
Public Involvement (Dave Dreher) .....	444-6245
Secondary Roads (Gary Larson) .....	444-6110
Road Inventory & Mapping (Zia Kazimi) ....	444-6111
Traffic Safety (Albert Goke) .....	444-7301
Traffic Data (Dan Bisom) .....	444-6122
Transit (Janis Winston) .....	444-4210
Urban Planning (Lynn Zanto) .....	444-3445
ITS Planning (Ross Tervo) .....	444-9248
Data Base Manager (Dawn McCallum) .....	444-6115
Newsline Editor (Joan Scott) .....	444-7307

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## MDT's Mission

*To serve the public by providing a transportation system and services that emphasize quality, safety, cost effectiveness, economic vitality and sensitivity to the environment.*



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